



Council Member Pool's Budget Initiatives

Item 1.29 (Council Member Pool) Help Corner Stores Offer Healthy Foods

Council Member Pool's Healthy Corner Stores Initiative would help underserved Austin communities access healthy food.

- Through this Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) would administer a \$400,000 grant program that would:
 - Help local corner stores in low- to moderate-income areas offer healthy food; and/or
 - Engage with local communities to develop support for access to healthy food options.

Residents in underserved Austin communities do not have reliable access to healthy food.

- Many communities in the Austin area do not have access to healthy foods. Roughly 17 percent of Travis County residents – many of whom live in underserved East Austin communities – lack access to nutritious foods.¹
- Less affluent areas tend to have significantly fewer grocery stores and significantly more corner stores than other, more affluent areas.²

The Healthy Corner Stores Initiative uses a proven model and is ready to go in Austin.

- The Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) already has experience working on similar projects in the past, including:
 - Implementing a mini-grant to a non-profit to improve access to healthy foods in corner stores in two underserved zip codes; and
 - Facilitating training for residents and stakeholders on effective strategies helping increase access to healthy foods in corner stores.
- A number of stakeholders in Austin have supported this type of initiative, including Austin Interfaith, Go Austin/VAMOS Austin, the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board, and the American Heart Association.
- Other major cities have successfully implemented similar healthy corner stores programs, including: Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Minneapolis, and Providence.³

¹“Community Health Assessment,” Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (December 2012).

²“The Grocery Gap,” The Food Trust (2010).

³“Convenience stores: healthy food,” University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (Lasted Updated 11 June 2015).



City of Austin

Leslie Pool, Council Member District 7

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 1.49 (Council Member Pool) Improving Parks in Underserved Areas

Council Member Pool proposes investing in much-needed improvements and repairs for parks in underserved Austin communities.

- Residents in underserved Austin communities worked with Austin Interfaith to identify needed repairs and improvements in their local parks.
- These communities identified a number of improvements, including providing: benches, lighting, picnic tables, trash cans, and public restrooms, among other things.
- Completely implementing these requirements would require an \$11 million investment. However, City Council can still make significant progress toward improving these parks even if it decides not to make the full, needed investment.

Table 1. Breakdown of Needed Investments by Park

Park	Estimated Cost	Est. Cost (incl. Labor)
Joslin Elementary	\$387,692	\$503,999
Cunningham Elementary	\$25,560	\$33,228
Franklin Park	\$1,128,550	\$1,467,115
Dove Springs District Park	\$3,815,900	\$4,960,670
Garrison Park	\$570,576	\$741,748
Odom Elementary	\$429,750	\$558,675
Houston Elementary	\$636,250	\$827,125
Ponciana Park	\$497,300	\$646,490
Kendra Page Park	\$1,005,750	\$1,307,475
Williamson Creek	\$7,492	\$9,739
Peace Point at Town Lake Metropolitan Park	\$15,000	\$19,500
TOTAL	\$8,519,820	\$11,075,766

Source: Austin Interfaith, using City of Austin Data



City of Austin

Leslie Pool, Council Member District 7

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Table 2. Breakdown of Needed Improvements

Need	Number of Proposed Parks with Need	Estimated Cost	Est. Cost (incl. Labor)
Benches	8	\$8,750	\$11,375
Lighting	7	\$236,250	\$307,125
Repair track/trail	7	\$600,000	\$780,000
Picnic tables	6	\$81,000	\$105,300
Water fountain	5	\$18,400	\$23,920
Trashcan	4	\$4,000	\$5,200
Public restrooms	4	\$1,000,000	\$1,300,000
Children's playground	3	\$1,050,000	\$1,365,000
Shade structure	3	\$43,000	\$55,900
Pavilion	3	\$750,000	\$975,000
Dog waste station	3	\$960	\$1,248

Source: Austin Interfaith, using City of Austin Data



Item 1.50 (Council Member Pool) **Expanding Summer Camp in Underserved Neighborhoods**

Council Member Pool proposes expanding a well-established, free summer camp program, especially into underserved neighborhoods.

- Council Member Pool's proposal would add \$200,000 to the successful Summer Playgrounds Program, with the goal of expanding the program to roughly 20 playgrounds total, especially in underserved areas.

The Summer Playgrounds Program is a successful, established summer camp program that provides Austin children with valuable learning opportunities.

- Every summer, Austin runs the Summer Playgrounds Program, in which parents drop off their children free of charge for supervised play, activities, and education at city playgrounds.
- This year, the Summer Playgrounds Program provided children the opportunity to learn from numerous guest speakers discussing safety and healthy living, including, among others: Austin Firefighters, Travis County Underage Drinking Prevention, and It's Time Texas.
- This is an established, successful program that has been offered in Austin since 1928. This summer, over a thousand children participated in the program at 11 playgrounds.

Table 1. Summer Playgrounds Program Proposal Estimates

Category	Estimates
Average # of Youth Served at Location	108
Per Youth Cost	\$185
Cost for Average Camp Location	\$19,940
Total Cost for 10 New Locations	\$199,396
# of Youth Served at 10 New Locations	1,080

Source: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Dept.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Items 1.51 & 1.52 (Council Member Leslie Pool) Providing Internship Opportunities for Underserved Youth

Council Member Pool proposes investing in Austin's future workforce by providing critical internship opportunities for underserved high school students.

- Internships are an important way for Austin's youth – especially those in underserved communities – to learn critical job skills and gain important work experience.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would invest in internship opportunities with the Austin Airport (\$350,000) and the Austin Convention Center (\$200,000) for underserved high school students over 14 years old.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 1.53 (Council Member Pool)

Keeping Our Libraries Open at Existing Service Levels

Council Member Pool's proposal would ensure that Austin libraries can keep their current level of services – and that they will not have to cut hours or days.

- Last year, City Council partially restored the cuts to the days and hours that Austin Public Library branches were open, helping residents access their community libraries throughout the week and in the evenings.
- However, the current budget does not continue funding these existing service levels, which would lead to cuts in library branch hours and days.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would help maintain existing service levels and ensure community access to local libraries by restoring the \$713,000 funding not included in the proposed budget.



Item 1.54 (Council Member Pool) Investing in Our Libraries

Council Member Pool proposes bringing Austin’s investment in its public libraries to the same level as in peer cities.

- Austin residents appreciate their public libraries – there were over 3 million customer visits to Austin’s public libraries in 2014 alone.¹
- However, Austin currently ranks 11 out of 13 among peer cities on how much it invests in library materials, such as books, magazines, movies, music, and digital materials.²
- It would take a roughly \$4 million investment for Austin to rise to the same level of library materials investments as its peer cities.
- Council Member Pool proposes spreading this investment out over a decade, taking the first step toward reaching that goal by increasing the city’s investment in library materials by \$400,000 this year.

¹ Austin ePerformance Measures Online Database.

² Budget Question No. 116 (2015-2016 Proposed Budget).



Item 1.60 (Council Member Pool)

Investing in Much-Needed Improvements at Northwest Pool

Council Member Pool proposes making much-needed repairs to one of Austin’s most-used pools.

- Council Member Pool proposes repairing Northwest Pool with an investment of roughly \$1.5 million – an investment that would ensure Austin residents could continue to enjoy Northwest Pool for another decade.¹
- Fully funding repairs to keep Northwest Pool open for another 50 years would take a \$9 million investment.¹

Northwest Pool is one of Austin’s most-used pools – and could close without repairs.

- Northwest Pool is one of the most-used pools in Austin. Over 15,000 Austin residents live within a mile of Northwest Pool.²
- Nearly 3 in 10 individuals responding to online and at-pool surveys say someone in their household has used Northwest Pool in the past year – one of the highest rates in Austin.²
- However, Northwest Pool also badly needs repairs. It is nearly six decades old and has cracked decks and a failing piping system.²
- The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has identified Northwest Pool as a “critical pool” that needs “major renovation” and is unlikely to survive five years without major repairs or replacement.²

¹ Budget Question No. 220 (2015-2016 Proposed Budget).

² “Aquatic Facilities Needs Assessment,” Austin Parks and Recreation Department.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 1.61 (Council Member Pool) Transparency for CodeNEXT Policymaking

Council Member Pool proposes ensuring that important meetings on rewriting the city's land use regulations are videotaped and made available for public viewing.

- Austin is currently working on CodeNEXT, an important initiative to rewrite the city's regulations on how land can be used and developed in the city.
- To help engage the public and provide feedback on CodeNEXT, the City Council created an advisory group (the Land Development Code Advisory Group, or CAG), with members appointed by the City Council and City Manager.
- However, unlike City Council, Council Committees, or Boards and Commissions meetings, the city does not videotape and televise these important CAG meetings. Only audio recordings of CAG meetings are available.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would ensure that Austin residents are able to watch these important meetings so that they can participate in the CodeNEXT process.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 1.62 (Council Member Pool) Equalize Funding for Austin's Chambers of Commerce

Council Member Pool proposes distributing funding to Austin's Chambers of Commerce equally.

- Under Council Member Pool's proposal, each Chamber of Commerce would receive \$250,000 of city funding. This would adjust their funding levels as follows:
 - \$54,000 more for the Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce;
 - \$82,500 more for the Greater Asian American Chamber of Commerce;
 - \$12,500 more for the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce;
 - \$71,250 more for the Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; and
 - \$125,000 less for the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 2.28 (Council Member Pool)

Cutting Proposed \$3.8 Million Spending on New Gas Plant

Council Member Pool's proposal would save \$3.8 million currently earmarked to be spent on a controversial new gas plant.

- The current budget proposes spending on the first stages of a controversial project to build a new "combined cycle" power plant that uses gas and steam turbines.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would cut that spending from the budget, saving roughly \$3.8 million.



City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member
District 7**

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2107, Fax (512) 978-2117
leslie.pool@austintexas.gov

Item 3.18 (Council Member Pool) Expanding Financial Assistance for AE Customers

Council Member Pool proposes helping Austin residents who are having trouble making their utility payments by expanding established assistance programs.

- Austin Energy's Customer Assistance Programs help Austin residents facing financial difficulties in a number of ways, including:
 - Utility bill discounts;
 - Emergency financial help for individuals facing temporary difficulties;
 - Helping individuals pay off unpaid past bills by restructuring when those payments are due;
 - Providing support services for households with medically vulnerable individuals; and
 - Providing weatherization and other home energy improvements for low- and moderate-income households.
- Council Member Pool's proposal would expand access to these programs by increasing the Customer Assistance Programs' budget by \$500,000.